

REPORT

ON

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

IN

PENNSYLVANIA.

BY THE

*REV. GILBERT MORGAN, A. M.*

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE WESTERN UNIVERSITY.

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Report on the ... (2018)



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PURSUANT to notice a Public Meeting was held in the Mayor's Court Room, on Monday evening, Oct. 31st, on the institutions of public instruction in Pennsylvania.

On motion of Professor Patterson, M. D., President of the United States' Mint, B. W. RICHARDS, Esqr. was called to the Chair. On motion of Rev. Dr. Ludlow, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, R. W. CUSHMAN was appointed Secretary.

The Chairman having stated that the meeting had been called to hear, and to act on a Report from a Committee who had been appointed on this subject at a previous meeting; the Rev. Gilbert Morgan, late President of the Western University of Pennsylvania read the Report:—Whereupon the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted.

*Resolved*, Inasmuch as the diffusion of education among all classes is essential to the very existence and perpetuity of our free institutions, the most efficient means should be adopted to extend its blessings throughout this commonwealth.

*Resolved*, That while an honest difference of opinion may exist among the citizens of Pennsylvania in relation to questions of national and state policy, the education of all the people in common branches of learning and the maturity of our public [literary] institutions, should command the united and harmonious action of all parties and of all good citizens.

*Resolved*, That while we regard with proud satisfaction the measures which the Legislature has recently adopted in relation to common schools, we trust these are only the commencement of a system which the State with laudable emulation will carry forward to its perfection.

*Resolved*, That in order to the attainment of this end, we do most cordially recommend to the Legislature and to citizens of all classes and conditions the practical adoption of the grand principles contained in the Report of the Rev. Mr. Morgan.

*Resolved*, That while we do not mean to express our judgment upon every suggestion contained in the details of the Report, we do give our unqualified sanction and strongest recommendation to the establishment of a Board of Instruction, and the institution of a



Seminary for Teachers, as, in our opinion essential to the success of the cause of education within the commonwealth.

*Resolved*, That the surplus funds of the General Government which this State is about to receive renders the present a most auspicious period for the Legislature to carry out the grand principles which the Report recommends; and that, in our judgment, a portion of the proceeds of these funds can in no other way be so profitably applied to promote the interests of this commonwealth, and to secure to her that influence in the confederacy which, from her geographical position and her internal resources, she seems by nature destined to exert.

*Resolved*, That the Report be printed for distribution throughout the State: and that a committee be appointed to procure *one hundred dollars* to be devoted to this purpose.

*Resolved*, That this meeting do importunately solicit the hearty co-operation of the clergy of all denominations in promoting the general objects of this Report; and, that a copy be transmitted to every clergyman in the State.

*Resolved*, That a copy be also furnished to every editor of a public journal, with the earnest request that the attention of the people of this commonwealth may be directed by means of the press to the important subjects which it embraces.

B. W. RICHARDS, *Chairman*.

R. W. CUSHMAN, *Secretary*.

## REPORT.

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The Committee appointed to report a plan for a TEACHERS' SEMINARY and for a BOARD OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, approach a subject rendered unwelcome by the many experiments and failures, and by the excess of legislation. But this report will disturb the action of no law. Pennsylvania has institutions venerable from their illustrious founders, who have reared the temples of freedom and learning, and have left them for us to defend, mature and transmit. The recent extension of public works penetrating all parts of the State is furnishing new facilities for bringing separate languages and divided communities into one homogeneous and educated commonwealth.

This report aims, from the lights of experience, to establish *principles* on which legislation ought to be based, and to specify *plans* with a plainness and fulness suited to their practical application. This aim of the report requires that reluctant humility which descends from the dignity of science and legislation, and without the ornaments of style, treats with great simplicity of schools and education.

Pennsylvania will be what our common schools make our voters. Our liberties and happiness are staked on them. The proportion in all our colleges is less than one to four thousand. A school badly conducted induces the best families to withdraw their children, and with this alacrity at sinking occasions the odious distinction of high and low, and alienates the one from the other. The common school system is not for a lower class as some apprehend: its high aim is to educate together the youth of the neighbourhood, not merely in reading and arithmetic, but also in geography and history, in the Constitution and Laws, in the duties of citizens and officers, in the skilful use of our language in speech and writing, and in such other learning as suits their capacity and time. The poor man wants this learning to gain his living, and the rich to enter upon higher studies. The qualified teacher finds time to accomplish all these in early years. He overcomes all difficulties in the books, the house, the youth, or their parents. He does more than any one, after the pious and learned pastor, to form a happy neighbourhood. His scholars soon fill with merit all ranks, institutions and callings.

*Such Teacher must be Educated.*

In organizing an army, officers are first required to enlist men and form soldiers. The first money to educate the people should ever be to train the instructors of youth.



*Pennsylvania requires a large number.*

The schools when organized for one million and a half, will require 4000, and the English departments and private schools over 1000. As the frequent changes require a new supply every few years, and with a great increase, the yearly demand must exceed 2000. The existing institutions furnish very few. The State depends on strangers, mostly on transient persons, while thousands of neighbourhoods are not visited by suitable teachers, and are left to the wretched choice of no school or one of which they are ashamed.

What is the standard of qualifications? The first qualification of a teacher must be his own moral character; his example and precept to corrupt or purify youth. His second, is capacity to govern with mildness and order. His third, is skill in training the minds of his scholars according to their individual natures. Next to these should be placed his success in imparting the proper knowledge. Hence a professional education for the best order of common schools must be *appropriate—comprehensive—minute—exact—scientific and practical*. But more depends on *training the mind* than on the amount of knowledge gathered.

This training of the mind to be appropriate must inspire the teacher with a practical conviction of the value of virtuous habits and feelings, of accuracy in the first elements of knowledge. This training adapts itself to the capacity of each scholar—leads him to observe and think for himself—to reason cautiously and correctly—to be awake to every inquiry—imparts a sincere love of truth, which makes him willing to obey her voice, and give up prejudice for better information. This training gives the best rules and guidance for study, and for its pursuit after leaving school—and for developing all the faculties, whether moral or social, intellectual or practical, in due proportion and harmony. This training enables him to analyse a subject, argument or book, and to select and apply those parts of knowledge most suited to the means at his disposal, the allotted time, the wants of society and the destination of the scholar. Experience has fully shown that in order to continue for years in these schools without growing indifference or impatience, no habit of mind is so essential as a heart purified and cheered by the practice and consolations of religion.

In speaking of the kind and extent of knowledge required, the limits imposed are, what a young man—with suitable preparations—can obtain during three years of great effort—aided by learned and skilful Professors—in a well endowed and richly furnished Seminary. The true economy in this matter for the candidate and for the State is—in the given time—by the given means—to bring out the greatest results.

A just estimate of the required knowledge is to be found in the fact, that to apply knowledge, especially to minds of every variety, requires knowledge far beyond the point in hand. The Almighty Creator has constituted all parts of the universe in such intimate relations and dependence that no one thing stands alone or can be



explained by itself: the eye is suited to the light without and the mind within. The most familiar objects and events, as the falling leaf, the shortening day, the changing moon, the origin of words and arts, require a wide range of knowledge. Must a teacher among fifty youth stand exposed at every question? He must by his knowledge command respect and confidence. He is to awaken all their powers, to perfect their manners, to train their minds. His office is not merely to hear lessons and recite pages. He is to impart knowledge and aid parents and pastors in forming wise and virtuous characters for all the relations, duties and happiness of this life, and of immortal life. The branches of knowledge to be imparted to teachers in this Seminary may be arranged in ten comprehensive departments.

### I. *English Grammar.*

This will respect 1st. The doctrine of signs or the visible forms of language. It includes the mode of teaching the letters as signs of the organs of speech and of their contacts—formation of syllables—cure of bad articulation—rules of spelling—doubtful orthography—pronunciation.

2. Etymology—what belongs to each class of words—prefixes, terminations, and inflection—logical distinction of words.

3. Lexicography—qualities of a perfect dictionary—practice in framing a dictionary for particular words, as “Congress,” “legislative,” giving the original form, derivation, primary sense and acquired uses—practice of analysing and defining terms.

4. Sentences—specimens of every kind with their variations, and skill in classing and analysing periods.

5. Syntax—its general principles, its rules and exceptions—idioms of the language.

6. Punctuation and construction of discourse.

7. Prosody—construction of verse and scanning.

8. Analysing difficult portions of prose and verse as to grammatical forms, the idea and the emotion.

9. Reading. The science and practice of rhetorical reading.

10. Expressing ourselves in conversation, in discussion and in prepared oral composition.

11. Writing the language with grammatical accuracy.

12. Vocal music. The teacher should be able to form his youngest scholars to the practice of singing. It should precede reading. Its great aim should be to cultivate the voice and the ear and all the soul for the highest efforts of speech.

It will be seen that Grammar in some of its forms is essential to written language. It should accompany every reading lesson—should be imparted at first orally. Language communicates thought and emotion. Grammar is skill in the use of language from knowing its forms.

## II. *The English Language and Literature.*

This includes 1st. The history of its origin, progress, eras and present character;—its excellencies and defects—the corruptions to which it is exposed—the methods by which it is to be studied.

2. Rhetoric and criticism.

3. Analysis of different writers as standards in the kinds of writing to which they belong.

4. Laws of interpretation applied to difficult portions of writing, as ancient documents, constitutions, laws, proverbs.

5. Constant practice in writing lectures on parts of the course, constructing treatises, writing on subjects of general literature, addresses, reports, the practice of speaking original orations and addresses.

The teacher is by profession an English scholar. The Professor charged with this department must himself be a good Greek and Latin scholar, but his aim is to benefit English schools.

In this department we have less to do with the mere dress of thought. It is mind walking forth clothed in appropriate attire to instruct, command and please.

## III. *Writing and Geography.*

1. The Teacher of a school must be the writing master to form his scholars without loss of time to a fair hand.

2. He will also practice sketching and shading with chalk, pencil and brush.

3. Book-keeping and the needful forms of business.

4. Geography extensively—construction of maps and routes—statistics, travelling, commercial interchange.

5. History of events with a system of chronology. This department again relates to visible forms.

## IV. *Mathematics.*

1. Arithmetic is the most useful art and the most perfect science in the reach of the schools. It is to be treated in every form—by investigating relations, signs, principles, terms, rules, different writers, and modes of teaching, till the learner can compose a good book or use a bad one.

2. Algebra.

3. Geometry and Mensuration.

4. Trigonometry and Surveying with the practice of plain Engineering.

5. Drawing, applied to regular bodies, to projections, to landscapes, to machinery, to architecture.

## V. *Natural Science.*

1. Natural Philosophy—its mathematical principles and physical laws—with an extensive application to phenomena of nature and the arts—and to astronomy.



2. Chemistry with its applications.
3. Mineralogy—geology—soils and surface in different countries.
4. Botany, preserving, imitating and analysing plants—uses in gardening, agriculture and the arts.
6. Human Anatomy and Physiology—natural history.

This department needs a Professor who combines thorough science with much practical knowledge, aided by apparatus, cabinets, &c. Much useful knowledge may by a permanent teacher be introduced to the most advanced class in some common schools. It is no honour to be ignorant of these things. We must know and obey the laws of nature. These studies wisely introduced save time otherwise lost. The Lyceum system aids the study of some. The arts have placed these studies among the necessities of life.

#### VI. *Mental Science.*

The sources of knowledge—nature and kinds of evidence—sources of belief, of prejudice, of false reasoning—logical analysis of terms, and arguments.

The mental acts or faculties—their proper mode of culture—the classification of knowledge and rational method—those principles of human nature which connect man with the fine arts, society and religion. Perhaps no study so disciplines the mind for the practice of teaching as these more practical parts of mental philosophy.

#### VII. *Political Science.*

1. Civil history. This does not refer to mere events. Its subject is man as a member of society. It is a true and clear illustration of man moulded and impelled by relations, domestic, political, commercial, literary and religious. To be unread in this volume of recorded providence is to remain a child. The civil history of the colonies and of the United States, will be a natural introduction to the careful study and interpretation of the Constitution of the United States, of Pennsylvania compared with other States, and of our most useful laws—the nature of our municipal institutions—duties of citizens and officers—the use of legal forms.

This department must be regarded of great value to the instructors of our youth to inspire them with a pure and unadulterated love of country, and reverence for the laws and institutions of their native land. Liberty to be enjoyed must be understood, its principles early studied, its authors and defenders revered and its practice cherished. The dangers to which it is exposed by vice and ignorance, by corruption and faction, should enforce obligations to form a noble character. So far from there being any necessity to bias the minds on those points on which great and good men differ, youth is the only time allowed to teach principles without passion. We are not saying how much can be introduced into the district school, but what must be imparted to the well qualified teacher. The wisdom of all ages warns us against neglecting these studies which form the enlightened patriot.

Aristotle, the most competent judge of antiquity, affirms, "All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depend on the education of youth."

### VIII. *Moral Science.*

1. Natural Theology implies a scientific acquaintance with any part of nature, and also a perception of the wisdom, power and goodness of the Creator. This perception of divine intention as a habit of mind, imparts dignity to science, and power to the moral sensibilities. It is the absence of atheism.

2. Bible Ethics.—The relations and duties we hold with our fellow men are described with great simplicity in the Bible. Two scholars at enmity may find great difficulty in overcoming their inveterate alienation; it may aid them to study the example and precepts of Jesus Christ. The teacher of youth has often a necessity to reform the vicious before instruction can begin. The direct claims of God upon the consciences of the young, may do more than chastisement to awaken a sense of obligation and the desire of amendment. The study of the Bible, and making a selection of its most suitable parts, and using its moral power to govern with mildness and reason, do not imply that every teacher, or every neighbourhood, must use the Bible as a school book. But the scientific instruction suited to a seminary must not stop with the study of the Scriptures, nor with the evidence of their inspiration, nor principles of interpreting their language, but

3. Moral Philosophy must investigate the *principles* on which those very Bible ethics are often founded. The duty to speak the truth, and pay our debts is plain—but when we trace their relations to the perfections of our nature, to the condition of society, and to the attributes and moral government of God, to our final happiness, those plain duties become sublime principles—holy, eternal, the privilege and joy of upright minds. Under this head of moral science we place the principles and practice of *polite manners* and polite feelings. We mean, benevolence of heart, regulated by a knowledge of human nature and the habits and refinements of society. Connected with moral science is cheerful and voluntary obedience to order and authority. The teacher during his preparation in the Seminary must form and manifest a character worthy of a model to be imitated.

### IX. *The Science of Education and Practice of Teaching.*

This requires exact illustrations of the principles on which this whole course ought to proceed, with the modification suited to the common school—the motives suited to the young—difficulties to be met—government of schools—classing scholars—order and extent of study—selecting books—best modes of conducting each process. Each teacher still must study himself and have his own plan.



### X. *Model School.*

A large common school placed under the care of the Seminary, where each teacher can apply his knowledge and acquire experience and tact.

The young men by reviews, taking notes, constant practice in oral and written lectures, and by the experience of the model school, must acquire the knowledge, and at the end manifest preparation and fitness to teach by examinations before impartial and qualified judges.

The want of appropriate text-books, suited to this peculiar discipline and science, will call for preparing such as are most essential. But the reliance must be oral and original communication of knowledge and practice. The relations and uses of one study to throw light on others—the intimate connexion of the parts of the same branch, a just introductory survey at beginning, a review at the close are means of sure results. Whatever is worthy of being taught should be made the subject of direct instruction in its natural connexion and assigned place.

The Faculty requisite to execute this whole plan will be,

1. A President of the resources and capacity required to sustain a college with some peculiar fitness for this. He may ordinarily be expected to act as the Professor of the English language and literature, mental, political and moral science, and of education.

2. A Professor of Natural Science.

3. A Tutor of Mathematics.

4. A Tutor of Grammar.

5. A Teacher of the Model School.

Music, writing, German, and other branches must find among the faculty appropriate qualifications.

The committee would do injustice to the merits of this institution by leaving an impression that it is new—an experiment—uncertain of working well. The steam-boat is no longer an experiment. Prussia has more than forty Teachers' Seminaries, working to admiration. In France thirty are "so many great centres of illumination for the people." The one in Massachusetts is frequented by young men who omit their schools to increase their furniture, wages and reputation. But this State has far greater need of a Teachers' Seminary than those portions of our country where the best teachers are usually trained in the schools where they spend their youth. We have few such schools: this seminary may raise up many.

Having before us a definite plan of a Teachers' Seminary occupying but three years—the time usual in the rudest trade, we are better able to determine whether it ought to be an independent institution, or be a department in a college. Several colleges have displayed an active zeal in qualifying teachers for schools. The State has given funds, Trustees have notified the public, Professors have done their best, but young men do not come: the feelings and habits of the whole State appear to be turned away from this mode. All the colleges in the State have communicated to this committee their experience. The one most sanguine and after years of effort, writes



“Though we have proposed a liberal course and offered to confer the degree of a teacher not one young man has gone through our course with a view to teaching.”

It should not remain obscure that a department in a college is far from a Teachers' Seminary. In practice the former omits the most essential things, young men stand loosely connected with candidates for degrees—the State never expected the college to incur greater expense than to give instruction free of expense to those who apply.

To introduce this entire Seminary into a college—two distinct faculties—edifices—courses and discipline—all in contrast, would be a marvellous change and hazard for the college,—would save no expense. How can an impartial legislature select out of many rival colleges? How idle to expect funds from the State! Can a mere appendage meet the wants, command the confidence, and stand out before the commonwealth a monument of her wisdom and State policy? The committee were instructed to spread upon this report the evidence that a college is not well adapted to do this work. Should any hesitate, they will consider in detail the above course of training and instruction. The nature of the work, the public sentiment and the history of facts, concur that a separate Seminary is best and cheapest, and for this State the only hope.

The special benefits presents some aspects worthy of notice.

1. The Teachers' Seminary will create a well known standard of qualifications and excite a universal effort for the attainment.

2. It will inspire confidence in the wisdom of the Legislature, and give to the school system its great efficiency, win to it the best families, and prevent the alienation of classes.

3. It will cherish the best feeling towards higher institutions, multiply students for academies and colleges. Teachers thus educated by the State and for the State, will inspire reverence for her laws and authority, diffuse the practice of liberty, and enable the American Broughams to say, in defiance of demagogues and sycophants, “the school-master is abroad in our land.”

The committee have spoken of *one*, that definite ideas of a Teachers' Seminary might be had. The term *college* would to most minds better convey the main idea of a Faculty, a full course, a settled economy. It is left for the Legislature to say how many and how modified each shall be.

The only pledge the State will need that young men so educated intend to teach, is the peculiar discipline suited to this one profession.

That few will continue many years furnishes a stronger demand for preparation to supply that perfection which practice gives.

In place of making the State bear the whole of the expense, it is wiser, and more in keeping with the genius of our institutions, that the expenses of board and tuition be moderate, and that a fund be loaned—in small sums—on good security—to meritorious young men—to be returned after a finished education shall enable them to earn it in teaching.



It will not be difficult to have one such institution opened early in the spring. As a special benefit to existing schools during the first and perhaps the second year, Teachers might be admitted during the recess of their schools in the summer.

When we consider that the mode of governing this Seminary, as will appear in the second part of this report, removes the obstacles with most politicians, that the colleges express their experience in favour, that those who reject the school fund can find no like objection to this as increasing any burthen, that it endangers no appropriation to other Institutions, a Providential opportunity seems to arise for the people of Pennsylvania with the union of all hearts, to establish a Teachers' Seminary, and to render the Common School System equal to our wants and worthy of our confidence.

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#### BOARD OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

To rely wholly on the provisions in the constitution, or on the laws of the legislature for a system of public instruction is like omitting courts of justice to apply the laws. A single institution under its own board is wholly different from a complex system consisting of different grades; while of the same grade one is an ancient and well endowed daughter of the republic, the other her youngest sister, just setting out in life. Even despotic governments with patriarchal rights, on entering upon a system of education are compelled to use a board. But a popular legislature without a prudential board is a man without hands. An opposite mistake was made as early as 1787, when New York appointed her board of regents to supply the place of local boards. But as institutions of different grades multiplied and local boards were found needful, the regents mature plans and apply the revenues of the state, and organize departments for teachers with general supervision. William Penn, himself a good scholar, a wise legislator, and devoted to the education of the people, adopted while in England in his celebrated "frame of government" this fundamental principle for a free people: "That which *makes* a good constitution must *keep* it so—viz. men of wisdom and virtue *propagated* by a virtuous education of youth." Hence his twelfth article "The governor and provincial council shall erect and order all public schools in the said province." He even provided that one-third of the council should be "a committee of education." Good laws were also enacted. The first was in 1683, on his first arrival;

“The laws of the province shall be one of the books taught in the schools.” These noble provisions failed in practice from not having a board of public instruction, permanent, competent and responsible.

The early origin of the Friends’ public school, and the beginnings of the University by Franklin in 1743, did much to raise up men for the public service and to supply the neglect of the constitution and laws of the founder.

In vain had the Girard trust of two millions been given to an annual council had not this body constituted a Board of Directors to act for them.

The revolutionary constitution of ’76 contains an article which “proclaims liberty throughout the land to all the inhabitants thereof:” “A school or schools shall be established in every county by the legislature for the convenient instruction of youth, with such salaries to the masters, paid by the public, as may enable them to instruct youth at low prices; and all useful learning shall be duly promoted in one or more Universities.”

In the third year of the conflict for existence, 1779, the state under an excited feeling of sovereignty created the “University of Pennsylvania,” and after the war chartered Carlisle College and several academies. Here then were the elements of the Pennsylvania system, the University of the State, a few colleges, county academies, and the neighbourhood schools. Under the fostering care of a public board, these filiated institutions had, at small expense, early reached a vigorous manhood.

The revised constitution of 1790 assigns the 7th section to learning. On the first article is founded the present common school system, which forms no part of the objects of this board. The second article is “The arts and sciences shall be promoted in one or more seminaries of learning.” It is to be regretted that clearness of views and distinctness of language should retrograde in the constitution. But this vague epithet, “Seminaries,” including every thing above schools, soon infected the people and the legislature with like vagueness: academies are multiplied faster than counties, college after college, regardless of place or use—two in one county seven miles distant. This madness reached its climax in 1819 in raising an academy to a second University in a part of the State where the need was not felt or discussed, or a dollar subscribed! Many seem to regard a charter like granting a patent for the inventor of a machine—forgetting that the State must suffer cost and infamy. There is also a quackery in legislation as well as in learning, and an evil confined to no one State; the lust of exercising power where wisdom requires dele-



gation. Most legislatures in some portion of their history have evinced a jealousy of colleges and a desire to recall their charters; but in no State does this passion for holding and exercising power more obstruct the appointment of a public board to act for the State than with ourselves. Still we have a similar board for internal improvements. Here is delegated obligation. Before the last ten years Pennsylvania subscribed stock, now she executes the grandest undertakings with her own hands. Do the people think less honourably of the legislature for using a board?

Perhaps no state in the civilized world furnishes clearer evidence of needing a board of public instruction. We had but little revenue gleaned from taxes to sustain a few young institutions. We commenced all fresh under the new Constitution of 1790. It was then known that multiplying academies beyond the youth to be educated, and the contributions of the people, was a public injury, still the sixtieth academy will never hear the names of many a boasting predecessor.

While no college in the State has had the means of safe existence, while failures were frequent, and when all students of a real college grade could be accommodated in two, at most in three, still the sixth, when New York had but two, and at length the tenth and at the last session the twelfth, and thirteenth and fourteenth college were gravely chartered! Had application been made to a neighbouring State each of these three must have secured from patrons 130,000 dollars before a charter could be asked.

Public lands given to trustees were seen to slip through their hands, still portion after portion has been alienated equal to 60 or 70,000 acres. After all men knew, after public derision proclaimed that 10 or 20,000 dollars given to a college might pay a debt or build a house, but gave no security of continuance or success, still no less than 300,000 dollars have been paid from an empty treasury. These sums at interest applied by a State board would have produced a richer harvest.

It also appears on examination of the documents, that besides laws for the education of the poor and on the whole school system, with respect to the colleges and academies principally, near 200 laws are spread over the Journals. What is very natural all these laws are based on local interests—all originate from individual solicitation—not one has a comprehensive principle—not one introduces a system of education, or even tends to remedy an evil—all increase the contention, the poverty and the dissatisfaction. The expense attending the last forty-six years of legislation on this vexed subject, has been

swelled by the reluctance of large portions of the people. Many bills have incurred the expense and failed. As the average expense of a law in the pay of members is near 600 dollars, the expense of legislation on these seminaries must be near 200,000 dollars. But the worst evils are the feelings of alienation and disloyalty kept up in those dissatisfied with their obtaining no more, in others at their obtaining any. When learning destroys patriotism and veneration for authority, and forms the State into parties, there is no common danger. An honest democracy always have leaders to repel their own benefactors and to trample on their own blessings. The natural remedy is a board of public instruction to stop this scrambling for money, to terminate this excess and quackery of law-making—and with wisdom and economy apply to the different institutions the funds set apart for this great department of the commonwealth.

Pennsylvania will have the following institutions:

1. The Academies for male and female instruction, high schools, &c.
2. The Colleges—qualifying young men for professional study.
3. Medical and Law Schools.
4. Asylums for particular classes.
5. Institutes for particular arts and sciences—as the art of mining, agriculture, mechanic arts.
6. Teachers' Seminaries.
7. Girard College,—though not dependent for funds, yet being an asylum, an academy, a college and a teachers' seminary, it merits an honoured place in this enumeration.
8. The University of Pennsylvania.

All these and like institutions are included in the second article of the 7th section of the constitution. The board created by the legislature will comprehend all above common schools. Those belonging to its immediate supervision will be all that receive funds. Those which constitute the main object of the board are the Academies, the Colleges and Teachers' Seminaries.

We are prepared to speak of the duties which the legislature will transfer to their board.

### I. *The duty of Wise and Constant Supervision.*

This implies no intermeddling with the internal management committed to local boards. A legislature from its rotation and nature cannot give advice, suggest improvements, point out evil tendencies



and thus by presence rather than power impart the harmony of progressive improvement. But experience has shown that a well constituted board by an annual report and by fixing the rules on which funds are distributed can produce all good results and without offence. This board will need to mature and publish the rule on which institutions may expect and claim funds: as the academy may not trench upon common schools in the neighbourhood by introducing elementary departments to draw money from that source, nor to swell the list for academic funds. In like manner the college, though it originated from an academy and retains that organization, yet it may not claim funds as an academy nor swell its list for the college fund. The college cannot legally be two things. Besides one object of the college fund is to enable the colleges to cease as academies. The government of boys at a grammar school, and the treatment of young gentlemen at college, forbid this amalgamation. It violates the distinction of charter, law and nature. When a college thus comes down to occupy the lower grade it will cease to be the patron of academies. It becomes a rival and alienates the whole class of lower institutions. This inveterate evil shows the need of an impartial board.

This supervision includes visitation and correspondence. The circular letter must secure all the information needful to the board, and their annual report will return the suggestions and knowledge most suitable for the institutions under their care.

II. A second duty is to apportion to each institution the money intended by the State.

III. The board will make those rules which will prevent contravening and evading the intention of the State.

IV. The board will mature and submit to both houses any bill respecting application for colleges and all institutions above academies and for any object in their department of the public good.

V. This board will organize and conduct such seminaries for teachers as the legislature shall direct.

VI. Grant charters to such academies as shall comply with the legal requisitions, and also furnish satisfactory evidence that the interests of existing institutions are not improperly invaded.

VII. This board will meet annually, make their own by-laws, elect a Secretary of public instruction of Pennsylvania, to whom all communications can be made, and as much of whose time commanded as the duties of the office require, and on whom the legislature may call for any information in this department.



A board qualified to perform these duties must have the following characteristics:

1. Its members should be permanent.

The changes incident to removals, resignation and other causes, render it difficult to mature plans, overcome obstacles by time, and to carry wise measures into steady and full operation. The greatest of all hinderances are new men and new schemes, and new parties inseparable from a board other than permanent.

2. Its members should be a fair representation of the geographical divisions of the State, and what is more important, of the great religious communities of the people. These have appropriated their own earnings to found and cherish the colleges. The constitution, charters and laws all claim for these communities equal privileges. There is no way of educating the people by repelling those who alone can render that education sure and favourable to public virtue.

The policy of the State is to make the best of all we have, to distribute funds in proportion to the people benefitted, and to require like responsibility in the universal success of the public system.

3. This prudential board must be constituted irrespective of the changes of party. In education there is but one party. Every good and wise man is pledged for its support. The people at large will always be the friends of learning when not impelled by mistake and perverse leaders.

The board, like a father amid his children, must be the purest fountain of equity that humanity admits. We name one method of securing in Pennsylvania such a board, permanent, competent and responsible, and with the least exercise of executive and legislative intervention.

1. Let the Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, and Superintendent of Schools be members by their office. They are present, have leisure, and are alive to the public feelings.

2. Let the judges of the Supreme Court be members. The duties of the board require the matured wisdom of the law.

3. Let six members be chosen as the legislature direct. Men devoted to public instruction, men who retire from public service with eminent purity may be put in requisition.

4. Let the Presidents of the Colleges, of the Teachers' Seminaries and of the University be members.

No men are more disciplined in rigid economy in making a limited amount produce the greatest results. They better know what is wanted and the sources of the evils to be met. They represent every portion of the State, and in a very just proportion the religious com-



munities. As the distribution of college funds must be on equitable and common rules they have no temptation to do wrong; while the State has for a pledge that providential connexion of our interest and obligations. The colleges depend on the academies for students, and can never flourish until they act—the former as patrons—the latter as classical preparatory schools. Under this board both are brought into their proper relations to render the best results to the public. The members of this board will become personally known—want of success will attach blame, and a corporate conscience cannot be laid aside. Their annual report—the interest of every institution, the eyes of the whole people and the presence of the legislature, create the highest responsibility, as no party, no sect, no power can conceal or defend that which is not defended by equity and impartiality.

It remains to consider the *principle* on which the State will, through this board, sustain and mature the whole complex system of public instruction. One governing principle pervading all institutions is desirable. As in the material universe, gravitation is the same whether it reaches the mote that floats in air, or bends the careering world to its orbit. Pennsylvania has a principle incorporated in her common school system no less applicable to all classes of higher Seminaries, viz: *to appropriate the interest of increasing capital—to help those who help themselves—in proportion to the number of pupils.* We briefly remark

1st. It will greatly injure the common school system to swell that fund so as to pay the entire expenses. It is found that while the wealthy families pay each year, they will send their children and secure the best teachers; but when this motive ceases, they form private schools to the greatest injury of lower classes. Better far to endure resistance to the present law than to glut the school fund.

2nd. For the State to give to an Academy or a College where excellence has assembled many students, and to one where neglect has reduced its numbers to mere existence, the same sum is contrary to reason; is not impartiality but stupid injustice.

3d. On the distribution of interest rather than of capital—the funds of the State are usually of the nature of interests. Why give capital? No good reason can be assigned. The history of Pennsylvania in every period and portion proves the practice bad. Giving the interest leaves the sources secure, gives simplicity to legislation, reality to the board, and what is vital, introduces economy and patriotism.

The legislature may designate a sum yielding 10,000 dollars for the Academic and 20,000 for the College fund.

This pledge of yearly aid is the best specie-capital. This certainty of public aid, calls forth private patrons. The grand aim of our republic is few laws, few exclusive rights, great security and confidence, union of rights, individual devotion of property, time and care to promote public Education.

In governments approaching despotic—even in the mild forms of concentrated authority, as in Prussia and in France, it may be wise policy to avoid charters, and boards and consultation among the people. These governments preserve themselves by educating the people to be *subjects*, the passive recipients of favours. But the people of this Commonwealth are not subjects but *citizens*, from whom originate the laws and authority, and who consult for all the interests of this and of coming ages. The grand obligation and business of this age is to educate the succeeding and prepare them for a higher level of action. The philosophy of our system of public instruction is to mature and exercise this willingness of individuals and of communities to endow and sustain public instruction. Boards voluntarily formed and zealous for their local interests in harmony with a pervading system, diffuse the life and practice of self government. They form the body-guards of the Law—they are our legions of Honour. Pennsylvania does not intend to withdraw this practical Republicanism from her proud Democracy. Let no man dream that a public board can lessen the importance of local Trustees. It is by a systematic giving of yearly interest that these boards will come forth in public zeal to act with the people. The system assumes what is true, that these academies and colleges have funds and patrons and professors and pupils. The State comes up to their timely *aid* to ensure stability in the public instruction, qualified Educators and moderate prices.

This principle may be illustrated by inferences. 1st. The practice of granting charters without requiring as conditions funds adequate to some success admits of no defence. It is as injurious to the people as it is dishonourable to the State.

2nd. If the legislature are pressed to continue the practice of giving away capital to all or to the most fortunate in the strife of rival claims for the same money, will not the argument be “we are in debt, just at a crisis, the people do not subscribe, a house is needed,” what answer more worthy of the state “the destruction of the poor is their poverty?” Will not a thousand dollars a year secured to the actual payment of professors on condition that debts are paid off and friends come forward with subscriptions, do more than giving of capital?—This liberality of the people will be what Montesquieu calls “the



*spirit* of laws in a republic”—an enlightened “virtue” diffusing intelligence and religion among freemen.

3d. Another inference is a necessity of a general rule, that an existing academy to be entitled to its share of funds, furnish legal evidence of having property, free of debt, yielding an interest over and above all tuition and subscriptions, of 200 dollars, applied to the salary of teachers; and that an application for a new charter secure for lots, house and apparatus \$3000, and other property yielding an interest of 400 dollars. In like manner an existing college must have funds free of debt equal to \$50,000, and yielding an interest applied to pay Professors of \$2,000. A new college charter should require pledges for lots, edifices and apparatus and library of \$40,000, and a fund certain of producing an annual interest of \$5,000. An institution not reaching these conditions can apply for a charter suited to its resources.

4th. This general rule for the incorporation of academies will enable gentlemen wishing to promote female education in separate institutions, bearing any name, to derive equal aid from the academic fund.

The points presented in this report in the order of their importance and of legislation are

1st. The appointment of the board of public instruction. This will require no money, little legislation, and ensure system and economy.

2nd. One or more Seminaries for teachers on the plan proposed.—As they are for the benefit of the common schools, the expenses should be from that fund. It is no diminution, but a vast increase of its good.

3d. The distribution of the *interest* of increasing capital. These form the Pennsylvania system, over which as a finished creation harmony smiles with a sabbath of rest.

There remains one obscure part—the University. The word has lost its meaning with many. In the revolutionary constitution of '76, this title came from Oxford and Cambridge. The scholars of that day and the framers of that article had no conception of a University in the sense of an irregular college. Then the word college meant more than now; and academy was applied to learned societies. If “tres faciunt collegium,” the union of several Faculties, an accumulation of science and literature, of libraries and learned men form the *university* in its American acceptation. In these matters “names are things.” Our country then had no institution higher than college. Then scholarship and even degrees had meaning. Boys and novices were not Doctors. The word university was introduced into our constitution by political men as expressing literary independence and sovereignty—they intended a broad foundation in order that indivi-



duals in this and other lands, and the legislature to all future times might multiply endowment, accumulate libraries, concentrate learned societies, open fountains until in their own words "*all* useful learning might be duly promoted." The progressive nature of science multiplying itself on every art and improvement, and shaping itself to the resources of the country and age, ceasing to be solitary, and with vital energy ascending by adaptation and union, requires the University of Pennsylvania to be ONE with great facilities for expansion and progress. Here "union is strength, knowledge is power."

More than one professor will be needed in many departments; new branches will claim a place, and labour will be divided. Let method and freedom unite—let its governors act for the state and commonwealth of learning—exclude no honourable competition in talent, fees or fame. Let no genius—no aspiring worth feel the power of precedence, or the bar of statute—multiply every facility for college graduates by years of well directed study to prepare for the high places in literary institutions and callings. Then will our university replenish colleges with professors, place scholars at the head of our drooping academies; exalt the professions, enrich, adorn and defend the commonwealth. The university must rise above all comparison; and it will be honourable for the State to propose liberal considerations to the western university to aim at eminence with a college charter.

The mere diffusion of college education is far short of superior science and perfected literature. How few scholars good and ripe ones are indebted to our own colleges. Few of all the presidents of our numerous colleges are of home education. Other States are fast ceasing to go beyond their own sons. A university replenished with talent and virtue, enthroned in the affections of the people, will produce more than professional respectability. Few of our medical men write even to record the most valuable facts in their own experience. Few ministers use the power press or stereotype their image on the age. Not many lawyers or statesmen come forth even in the periodical and living literature to hold communion with the higher ranks of cultivated taste. The tendency in respect to colleges is to divide and scatter and level and weaken and degrade learning. The selfish—the jealous—the mean will assuredly prevail against all that is benevolent, enlarged, noble and patriotic in our learning unless the university rise up a pyramid of light and strength. Massachusetts relies on permanent endowments to sustain her university. Virginia uses annual appropriations. Pennsylvania can unite the policy of both.



Her present endowment is a moderate foundation for an annual appropriation. If the legislature must delay for years to enter upon this part of their system, they may at least keep before them the symmetry of the whole temple of public instruction.

In regard to the whole system, our vast extent of internal improvements, our unequalled resources, and all that gives to Pennsylvania exalted rank in the Union, call upon us to claim our rights. Our geographical position in the arch of empire, our reputed honesty and wealth accumulating toil, will be for mockery and weakness unless educated men fill every department and cope with every antagonist.

We cannot close this report and appeal to our fellow citizens on our dearest interests without reference to our means.

Had this State no resources above former years, economy would urge the three main points in this report—the board—the seminary—the annual appropriation of interest. But the State has other resources. The apology for doing less than our imperfect institutions required was an unwillingness to increase the taxes. Now the funds can do three things, diminish our debts, increase our public works, and accomplish the entire system of our learning. Patriots of every party have long looked forward to the extinction of the national debt, and to a just participation of the revenues from the common industry of the people as the sure fund to educate that people. Other States will make this application, and their sons must rise to eminence while ours curse their degradation. How can the mere interest of half a million of that revenue be withheld from this great system of education reaching every family and pouring blessings on ten thousand schools. Can a road or canal of a few miles have claims compared to that for which the poor man toils and the rich man accumulates—the education of his children?

Shall we repel foreign capital and remain dependent on the other States for teachers, professors, models and scholars? Virginia sustained the last war by taxes, and when the money was repaid, like a wise parent she applies it to establish learning, to recall her sons from other States, and to sustain her ascendancy in the Union. The balance of power has become the balance of mind. Those States which can educate the greatest number of exalted minds have the sure and only means of political power at home and transcending in Congress.

Two millions given by a stranger to raise up the lights of learning from among poor orphans will be a monument to reproach us for neglecting the sons of the rich. Without institutions of learning we are all orphans—all in poverty. Individual wealth is no substitute for public institutions. Pennsylvania has no college, no academy,

no university furnished with the necessities of life—mere existence is the highest attainment. Witness the loss of mind—loss of wealth—loss of virtue—loss of power—loss of happiness and honour! This report has named the smallest sum for these immense interests of all the people to all times, that our representatives may act worthy of future history.

For half a century the purest minds in Pennsylvania have written and plead and legislated on this subject. Many have turned back in despair, some in disgust. Shall this appeal to our fellow citizens at their peaceful reflecting homes produce no action? We invoke the aid of every Pennsylvanian to secure wise, legislative and immediate action.

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COMMUNICATED.

At a meeting of a number of the citizens of Harrisburg, convened at the Pennsylvania State Library room, JOSEPH LAWRENCE, Esq., was called to the Chair, and HAMILTON ALRICKS, Esq., was appointed Secretary. The above report was read, and the views of the Hon. Calvin Blythe fully expressed. Whereupon the following resolutions, reported by the Rev. Wm. R. De Witt, were unanimously adopted.

Resolved, That the stability of the Republic and the happiness of its citizens essentially depend on the universal diffusion of the blessings of an enlightened education.

Resolved, That the wise and benevolent intentions of the framers of our Constitution can only be accomplished by furnishing every youth in this Commonwealth with the best means of obtaining such an education.

Resolved, That we have listened with interest and satisfaction to a report drawn up by the Rev. Mr. MORGAN, which proposes the means of giving greater efficacy and success to the common School system of Education adopted by the Legislature of this State.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this meeting, the appointment of a Board of Public Instruction, and the establishment and endowment of a Seminary for Teachers, would materially subserve the cause of Education in this Commonwealth; and it is hoped that it will meet the approbation of an enlightened public and the early attention of our Legislature.

(Signed)

JOSEPH LAWRENCE, *Chairman.*

HAMILTON ALRICKS, *Secretary.*